

Mar 77

POSITION ON LANGUAGE TRAINING

I Policy

The Association adopted "The Y and the Montréal Fact" as policy in 1975. References to personnel include:

A) Staffing

The necessary steps be taken to ensure that a staff force representing the required qualities in terms of skills and commitment can conduct the public and internal affairs of the Association in French and English.

Strategy

- A) When hiring and promoting the ability to work in both languages or the willingness to gain the skills becomes of significant importance for positions where bilingualism is designated as necessary.
- B) Attention should be given in the recruitment of staff to their cultural background as future developments will require staff indigenous to the two predominant cultures.
- C) To proceed immediately on a priority basis with a French language training program for present staff.

Language training for staff has been identified as a priority and every unit should be able to operate bilingually by 1979. The number of positions in the Association available to unilingual persons will become increasingly fewer. The Association is committed to provide support and assistance to staff.

II Present Program and Future Trends

The present program was designed and is operated especially for YMCA staff by the Department of Linguistic Services. To date selection of staff for language training has been very broad, but by September 1977 it will have become more selective. Some staff members, in jobs identified as high priority, will be participating in an accelerated program.

By June 1977, language priority for all jobs will be clarified. The training program for 1977-78 will include both regular and accelerated programs.

III Common Questions and Answers

1. What is bilingualism?

Within the Association, bilingualism is the ability of an individual to communicate in and understand the two official languages.

2. What is a working language?

The language in which verbal and written communications occur between and among employees.

3. What is competence in a working language?

The ability of an individual to communicate and understand in order to carry out his or her job.

4. What is or will be the working language of the Association?

Both French and English will be working languages in the YMCA. Increasingly, a working knowledge of French will become a reality in the Montréal Association.

5. If my job is classified as one requiring bilingualism, how much time will I have to learn the second language?

The time required will naturally depend on your present second language capability, the level of bilingualism required in your position and the time available for language training.

6. When and how will I find out if my knowledge of the second language meets the requirements of my position?

Most of you know already, however in the next 3 months the second language requirements, if any, of your position with respect to both internal and external communications will be clarified.

7. If I take language instruction, will it be during or after working hours and what proportion of the cost will the Association pay?

Our policy allows for some or all language training to take place during working hours and provides for payment of some or all of the cost. The actual proportion of such training taken during next year's working hours will depend on the relative urgency and priority of the individual situation and the degree to which the time to be devoted to such training is appropriate to the language needs of the position.

8. Bilingualism is required in my job and I am fluently bilingual. Will I be compensated for this skills?

Not directly. Your income is related to your job performance and your total set of skills, not any particular one of them.

9. What happens when a present staff member has not acquired the necessary degree of bilingualism required of his position?

Everyone is capable of acquiring at least some degree of proficiency in the other language. If such degree is inadequate, changes in position content or reorganization could be the solution. In a few instances, individuals might be assigned to another position where bilingualism is not required.

10. Will additional staff be available to provide coverage when employees are learning a second language?

Not necessarily, but time required for language training will be considered when determining staffing levels. All employees will contribute some personal time for language training.

11. Will there be any positions in the Association not requiring the two languages?

Yes, but very few.

12. Can I communicate with my superior in my own language?

You are entitled to do so. However, if your superior cannot communicate in your language, he will require time to acquire the necessary skills.

13. Everything else being equal, will a bilingual person be given priority in promotions?

Yes.